

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 201252Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1076
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DACCA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 6245

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TBIO, TPHY, IN
SUBJECT: MONKEY EXPORTS FROM INDIA

REF: MOSCOW 8281

1. THE EMBASSY HAS JUST LEARNED THAT DR. F. PERKINS, CHIEF, BIOLOGICS UNIT, WHO, CAME TO INDIA LAST WEEK IN AN EFFORT TO DISCUSS THE MONKEY EXPORT BAN. HE WAS ADVISED BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH SERVICES AND BY HEALTH SECRETARY PRASAD-BOTH OF WHOM HAD BEEN TRYING TO HELP WHO SOFTEN OR REMOVE THE BAN- NOT TO RAISE THE SUBJECT "FOR A WHILE". BOTH OFFICIALS SAID THAT THE PM WAS ABSOLUTELY UNAPPROACHABLE ON THE SUBJECT, AND THAT WHO WOULD GET NOWHERE. WE ARE TOLD THAT DR. PERKINS TOOK THEIR ADVICE AND WENT BACK TO GENEVA WITHOUT MAKING ANOTHER APPROACH ON MONKEYS.

2. MEANWHILE, WE CONTINUE TO PICK UP REPORTS HERE ABOUT EFFORTS
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TO INCREASE RHESUS MONKEY AVAILABILITY FROM OTHER SOURCES. A WHO OFFICER HERE (TAWIL) HAS TOLD US THAT WHO CHIEF MAHLER APPROACHED THE KING OF NEPAL WITH A REQUEST THAT NEPAL AUTHORIZE MONKEY EXPORTS. ACCORDING TO TAWIL, THE KING PROMISED TO LOOK INTO IT. HOWEVER, TRADE SOURCES HERE HAVE SEEN NO INDICATION OF ANY CONCRETE ACTION SINCE THEN.

3. MOHAN RAI OF VITA HAS JUST LEFT DELHI FOR A SHORT VISIT TO DACCA. BEFORE LEAVING, HE REPORTED HAVING HEARD THAT AN ORGANIZATION CALLED NATIONAL TRADING CORPORATION, WHOSE PRINCIPAL OFFICER WAS SCOTT CAMPBELL, APPARENTLY AN AMERICAN, WOULD BE GETTING AN EXPORT PERMIT FROM THE BDG "ANY DAY". HE WAS VISITING BANGLADESH TO SEE IF THERE WAS ANY ROOM FOR VITA TO GET INTO THE BANGLADESH MARKET.

4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION KATHMANDU AND DACCA MIGHT HAVE ON POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE SITUATION. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION ON WHAT ACTIONS, IF ANY, WHO IS CONTEMPLATING IN LIGHT OF PERKINS VISIT.

5. CONCERNING REFTEL REPORT OF A CHANGE IN INDIAN POLICY, THE BEST INFO WE HAVE IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NONE SO FAR. THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED EXPORT POLICY FOR FY 1978/9 LISTS "MONKEYS, ALL TYPES" AMONG THE ANIMAL SPECIES WHOSE EXPORT IS BANNED. THE GOI AND WHO OFFICIALS WE HAVE DEALT WITH ON THIS SUBJECT HAVE HAD NO INDICATION OF A CHANGE. THE SAME IS TRUE OF EXPORTER REPRESENTATIVES WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY SENT MONKEYS TO THE USSR.

6. ONE SOURCE IN THE COMMERCE MINISTRY HAS TOLD US THAT "THE GOI IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM A NUMBER OF SOURCES, INCLUDING THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, TO MODIFY ITS POLICY ON THE EXPORT OF NON-HUMAN PRIMATES. AS A RESULT OF THIS PRESSURE, A POSSIBLE CHANGE IN PRIMATE EXPORT POLICY IS NOW "RECEIVING THE URGENT CONFIDENTIAL

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ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT". WE ARE CHECKING FURTHER INTO THIS REPORT BUT THE SIGNALS WE ARE RECEIVING FROM WHO MAKE US PESSIMISTIC THAT ANY MEANINGFUL CHANGE IS IN THE OFFING.

7. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT BOPARAI'S BELIEF (REFTEL) THAT THERE HAD BEEN A POLICY CHANGE STEMMED FROM THE SAME GAZETTE PUBLICATION DEALING WITH FY 1977/8 EXPORT POLICY WHICH WE REPORTED ON IN NEW DELHI 3789. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, THIS DID NOT, AS FAR AS ANYONE HERE CAN DETERMINE, REPRESENT ANY SOFTENING OF THE MONKEY EXPORT BAN.
GOHEEN

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